

ADOLESCENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS PARENT EDUCATION

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Why do teenagers need to know about being a parent? Ogg (1975, p. 3) reports, "One in every ten 17 year old girls in the United States is a mother. In 1974 about 200,000 girls age 17 or less gave birth, 15% of them for the second or third time." There are many possible consequences of school age parenthood.

A baby of a teenage mother is more likely to die before the age of one year (Stickle, 1974). Researchers (Passamanick and Lilienfeld, 1956) have found that mental retardation is much more frequent among children whose mothers are under 20. Among this same group of mothers it has been found that more epilepsy occurs in their children (Newcombe and Tavendale, 1964). Also, more birth defects are found among children of teenage mothers (Menkin, 1972).

In a recent study (DeLissovoy, 1973) it was found that expectations of teenage parents for their babies were much too high. Mothers thought their babies should sit alone at three months. Seven months is when an average baby can usually achieve this task. Teenage fathers expected their babies to sit up at even younger ages. Young fathers also felt that their babies should be able to speak and be toilet trained by the age of six months. It was reported that teenage parents had a very low tolerance for crying. DeLissovoy reported the young

parents slapping, shaking, and abusing their children in other ways for not meeting their unrealistic expectations.

A teenage girl's education is interrupted and sometimes never finished. One survey (Bacon, 1974) found that only 11% of the girls who became pregnant between the ages of 13-15 ever graduated from high school. If the boy decides to marry the girl, he may have to drop out of school and get a job. Studies (Nye and Berardo, 1973) show that men who marry in their teen years have less chance for a good, high paying job. They usually have little chance for advancement in the job they can find.

If the teenage couple expecting the baby decides to marry, what are their chances of having a successful marriage? Kennedy (1975) has pointed out that during the first five years of marriage for teenage girls, two thirds of these marriages will end in a divorce.

Teenagers who have babies before they are 17 tend to have more children in rapid succession (Menken, 1972).

The mother of a teenage girl who is pregnant also goes through a severe crisis (Bryan-Logan and Dancy, 1974). Many times the mother of the girl ends up taking care of the baby when it is born. This burdens the mother of the teenager with responsibilities with which she had long been finished. She now has to face them again. Her dreams of her daughter are ruined.

Last of all, it affects anyone who pays taxes. This puts everyone in the picture. McAnarney (1975) says that in the mid-sixties it was approximated that the public spent around \$100,000 on each mother and offspring during the mother's reproductive years. Naturally this figure would be much higher today.

The picture painted for the school-age parent, as can be seen, is a bleak one. The problem does not end with the teenage parents. The problem is inclusive of all future parents. Because of ineffective parenting, the following things are happening to our children.

Elizabeth Ogg (1975) states:

Among the leading cause of death in infants under 18 months old, maltreatment ranks fourth. Each year, it is estimated, some 10,000 children are severely battered; 50,000 to 75,000 are sexually abused; 100,000 are emotionally neglected; and another 100,000 are physically, morally, or educationally neglected. Most shocking of all, at least 700 children are killed by their parents or parent substitutes every year (p. 4).

Poor parenting contributes to social ills such as mental illness, drug abuse, delinquency, crime, etc. (Lane, 1975 and Ogg, 1975).

Need for Research

Lane (1975, p. 4) says, "The single most important function of life--the development of human beings--has been left out of the educational curriculum." It has been shown there is a real need for parent education programs. Very few parent education programs are in existence. In 1972, the U.S. Office of Education and the Office of Child Development started a joint program to help schools set up parenthood training programs. The program was called "Education for Parenthood." Direct grants were not given to schools. Money from the government was seed money to help programs get started (Ogg, 1975). Also, through the years some Home Economics classes have dealt with parent education topics. Usually, whole courses have not been devoted to these topics.

So what exactly could an adolescent gain from a parent education program? Of course, it would depend on what was included in the

program. A good program could help accomplish these things for adolescents:

1. Better understanding of self.
2. Knowledge of human development reproduction, and birth control facts (including consequences of teenage pregnancy).
3. Awareness of different life styles. (Some of these may include no children.)
4. Knowledge of development needs of children (emotional, social, intellectual, and physical).
5. Experience working with young children.
6. Awareness of child-related careers (teacher, child psychologist, counselor, etc.).
7. Create more possibilities of summer or after school jobs, such as camp counselors, tutors, teacher's aides, etc.

The above listing is felt by the U.S. Office of Child Development and the U.S. Office of Education (Kruger, 1973) and Mary B. Lane, Director of Cross Cultural Family Center in San Francisco to be important topics for a parent education program.

The following are comments made by adolescents who have actually been involved in parent education programs. Roul Tunley (1975, pp. 41-42) reports comments as follows: A quiet 17 year old boy says, "Kids are so direct and down to earth, you can't remain aloof from them long. They've helped me a lot as a person, and I'm sure that when I become a parent, I'll be a better one as a result." Another boy remarks, "They've taught me patience for one thing. I find that I'm not only better at getting along with them now, but with older people as well."

Durbin (1973) reports these kinds of comments: One girl commented, "You learn how children work . . . and learn what to say to them. Instead of saying don't, you explain why they shouldn't do

something, with a reason" (p. 22). Another girl who wants to be a teacher someday says, "This class has helped me prepare to teach later on, to learn to expect different moods and different situations when dealing with children" (p. 22).

If parent education programs are to be truly effective, it is important to know what kinds of attitudes adolescents have toward parent education programs, what topics in a parent education program, in their opinion, would be the most beneficial, and what they are thinking about parenting in general. It would be helpful to know what their thoughts and ideas are in these areas. Retention of what is learned in a parent education program will be much greater if the program content is meaningful to the students (Kruger, 1973). By obtaining the adolescent's input about parent education programs, it will be possible to make parent education programs more meaningful and relevant. Cohen (1973) has said:

To provide education for young men and women that will make a difference in the way they lead their lives, we must respect what is really on their minds now, and not intrude what others . . . with the perspective of the adult generation believe they ought to be thinking and planning (p. 28).

Little research has been done to find out what adolescents think about parenting, parent education, and topics they feel should be included in a parent education program.

Definition of Terms

Parenting - Marland (1973) says, ". . . the full range of activities and concerns and all of the knowledge and skills that being a parent entails. . . ." (p. 3).

Parent Education - This term has more than one definition. In this study the term includes the following concepts:

1. Understanding self better.
2. Acquiring knowledge about human development and reproduction, birth control, family planning, human sexuality, etc.
3. Becoming aware of the effects of drugs, alcoholism, and V.D. on self and children.
4. Learning about different kinds of lifestyles.
5. Becoming better prepared for parenthood [this would include acquiring knowledge concerning pregnancy, prenatal development, infant care, developmental needs of children (which includes emotional, social, physical, and intellectual needs) etc.].
6. Becoming more acquainted with careers related to working with children.
7. Working with young children.

Purpose of Study

The general purpose of the study was to investigate the attitudes adolescents have toward parenting and parent education.

The specific purposes of this study were to:

- (a) Assess the attitudes and feelings adolescents have toward parent education.
- (b) Investigate adolescents' ideas concerning topics they feel should be included in a parent education program.
- (c) Examine attitudes adolescents have toward parenting in general.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were examined:

1. There will be no significant differences between adolescents who experienced programs concerned with parent education and

those adolescents who did not experience these kinds of programs according to the following:

- (a) how prepared they feel to be future parents
- (b) sex
- (c) socio-economic class
- (d) race
- (e) religious preference
- (f) religious commitment
- (g) marital status
- (h) incidence of children
- (i) incidence of experience with young children
- (j) parent model presented by parents

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Little research has been done to see what adolescent's attitudes are toward parent education and parenting in general. This review of literature will deal with what small amount of research there is in these areas and, also, some related literature. The following sub-topics will be covered: 1) The development of parent education programs for adolescents, 2) attitudes of adolescents toward marriage and parenting, and 3) attitudes of adolescents toward parent education.

The Development of Parent Education Programs for Adolescents

Nelson (1973) reported:

In the early 1960's the Children's Bureau provided funds for a demonstration program to be conducted at the Webster School in Washington, D.C. to show that comprehensive services could be delivered to pregnant girls in a special public school setting (p. 31).

In 1968, the Cyesis Programs Consortium was created. It's job was to promote research utilization and information sharing among the programs dealing with pregnant girls. At this time there are 35 programs operating (Nelson, 1973).

Eddinger (National Alliance Concerned with School Age Parents, DHEW Contract O E C-0-73-7020) reported:

in 1969 a group of human services professionals formed the National Alliance Concerned with School Age Parents (NACSAP)

as a private non-profit association. It is the only multidisciplinary organization specializing in technical assistance to those working with school-age parents, young families at risk, and sexually active youth (p. 5).

In 1971, the Cysis Programs Consortium was receiving funds from the Children's Bureau, Maternal and Child Health Service, Office of Education, National Center for Family Planning Services, Social and Rehabilitation Service, and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. As a result of receiving funds from a more widened area of agencies than in the beginning, the Cysis Programs Consortium was renamed the Consortium on Early Childbearing and Child-rearing (Nelson, 1973). The Consortium has held state conferences and workshops. One of their main functions is to help communities develop and make better the services for the teenage pregnant girls, the teenage fathers, and their children (Nelson, 1973).

In July of 1971 a project was designed to teach teenage mothers and pregnant school-age girls child development. This project, the New London Young Parents Program, was sponsored by the Maternal and Child Health Section of the Connecticut State Department of Health. The girls in the program ranged from ages 13-20. The two major goals of the program were: 1) to help the adolescent to gain knowledge concerning growth and behavior of children and to expose them to recent research findings dealing with child development, 2) to help them develop the tool of observing (Weigle, 1974).

Pioneering programs were also going on for adolescents who did not have the problem of immediate parenthood. In 1964, a child development lab was set up for high school students at Montgomery County, Maryland. These high school students had a six week training

period before they started working with the children in the child development lab (Ogg, 1975).

Another pioneering program was one in the Locke High School in Los Angeles. Students studying child development were sent out in the community to work in different child care centers. Ogg (1975, p. 7) reports, "It was led by a woman teacher who saw a triple need-- for parent preparation, for child care training to equip teenagers to hold productive, paying jobs, and for a way to keep potential dropouts in school."

In the early seventies a program in Dallas, Texas was created at Ewell D. Walker Middle School. This program was entitled, "Classes in Personal Living." It was directed at the sixth grade girls. The girls spent equal time in observing a pre-school set up by the Home Economics Department and in classroom discussion. The goal of the program was two-fold: 1) to learn about child development and 2) to gain insight into their behavior and to develop self discipline.

Also, in the early seventies the Parent Readiness Education Project was funded under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The Project is located at the Redford Union School District close to Detroit, Michigan. PREP's goals are to: 1) work with pre-school children who have potential learning problems, 2) to work with the parents of the pre-schoolers in teaching them child development and management techniques, and 3) to help adolescents become better prepared for parenthood. Twelve students each work with an individual pre-schooler to stimulate language development and to help strengthen the child's weak areas. The high school students work with the

children Monday through Thursday and then on Friday they attend a seminar (Parent Readiness Education Project, Diane K. Bert, Project Director).

In the fall of 1972, the Office of Child Development and the Office of Education, in a joint effort, began their support of "Education for Parenthood" programs. Kruger (1973, p. 4) reports it as an "effort to provide young people with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to become effective parents, whenever they assume the responsibilities of that role in life." Ogg (1975, p. 9) reports "Although it was called Education for Parenthood (EFP), the program was also seen as preliminary training for boys and girls whom it might attract into child-care careers."

Special curriculum materials were formulated in a package called "Exploring Childhood" by the Education Development Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The National Institute for Mental Health and the Office of Child Development funded the construction of these materials. It was tested in 200 schools and is available for distribution.

An elective course under the same name as the material "Exploring Childhood" is offered for girls and boys, grades 7-12 in some of the high schools. Water (1974, p. 3) reports the goals of the "Exploring Childhood" materials as to help students "become competent with children, understand how a child sees the world, gain a sense of biological and social forces that influence the development of a child, and explore their own identity." The course "Exploring Childhood" is set up where the students have some preliminary training before they begin working with young children.

In mid 1973, several voluntary agencies were given grants by the Office of Child Development to conduct demonstration projects outside of the schools. The following are the agencies that were chosen.

Short descriptions of these projects are given below.

1. Boy Scouts of America - Education for Parenthood Exchange (1974) reports, "Scouts have developed a new Family Living Skill Book, along with a teacher's guide and troop leader's manual. The Skill Book, designed for below-average readers in schools and Scout troops applies Scouting skills to realistic situations in inner-city and poor rural areas (p. 4). In their pilot project the Boy Scouts stressed career preparation. They, with some pretraining, worked as volunteers in child-care settings. A later project had adolescents run an eight week summer day-care camp (Ogg, 1975).
2. Boy's Club of America - Ogg (1975, p. 19) reported, "Teenagers in three pilot clubs have created video programs on various aspects of childhood, such as life in a day-care center or a children's puppet show." Another activity used by these pilot clubs is the Mother's Aide course, "A popular activity which prepares boys to run a paid baby-sitting service from their Boys' Club" (Ogg, 1975, p. 20). Another program they sponsor is called Help-a-Kid, in which they make Christmas gifts for day care centers and hospitals. Other boys provide Christmas parties for physically handicapped children. Rap sessions on female-male relationships are incorporated in other programs. One Boy's Club started a class for expectant fathers (Ogg, 1975).
3. 4-H Club - Teenagers training teenagers is a major tool in the 4-H Parenting programs. A group of teens were given a crash course so they, in turn, could teach their own child study group. All participants worked in a child-care setting twice a week for at least one hour each time (Ogg, 1975, pp. 23 and 24).
4. Girl Scouts of America - This group has several different kinds of projects going on. One project in Buffalo uses a mobile unit where a family life specialist helps adolescents relate to the children they are working with. The specialist helps them learn songs and games suitable for the children they are working with. Films are used to show the adolescents the needs of young children. Another program sponsored by the Girls Scouts is called "Preps for Living." In this project rural girls and boys, ages 12-17 are given three months instruction in family relations and child development. After this training they do field work in a child care setting. The Girl Scouts also have a program in one town in

which a 10 hour internship and classwork instruct Cadettes in the area of child development and family relations. Other programs have been initiated by the Girl Scouts (Ogg, 1975).

5. Salvation Army - "Parent Awareness" classes have been initiated in several cities by the Salvation Army. In some programs, after training has taken place, the graduates of the courses have chances to work for money in child-care settings. Other worthwhile projects have been initiated by the Salvation Army (Ogg, 1975).
6. Save the Children Federation - Ogg (1975) reports, "The Save the Children Federation trains teenage boys and girls as child advocates. They visit pre-schoolers and parents in their homes, bringing educational games and toys and story books with them" (p. 18). These teenagers worked five hours a week and were paid \$1.60 an hour. Class credit was given to them for being involved in the project (Ogg, 1975).
7. National Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers - Ogg (1975, p. 18) stated, "NFS concentrates on low-income urban youth, aged 12-15, who frequent it's neighborhood houses in Chicago, San Antonio, Denver, Philadelphia, and New York." Units in child development and sex education, plus beginning work experience with young children was the main thrust of the program (Fink, 1974).

Godbey (1976) reports, "During 1975-76 the Office of Education, Region IV, contracted with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to conduct an eight-state Parent Education Improvement Program" (Forward). Thirty-one parent/child programs were conducted. They were funded through various sources. The main objective of all the programs were to help the parents see how they could influence their child's development (Godbey, 1976).

The above programs look impressive, but it should be remembered that most of these are demonstration projects and very few schools have such programs. Classes concerned with parenthood topics have usually been in the home economics area. As a result, girls have been more attracted to these classes. Some vocational education courses have

been initiated for students interested in child-care work. Ogg (1975) reports:

In 1969-70, less than 10 percent of our high school population chose vocational education/home economics courses of all types, and this included only 2 percent of the boys signed up for child development courses, and fewer than 3,000 for care and guidance of children--hardly enough to make a smidgin of change in the next generation of fathers (p. 5).

Attitudes of Adolescents Toward Marriage and Parenting

What do adolescents think about marriage? With the high divorce rate in America, one might think they would be turned off from the idea. In the middle sixties a study was done in Georgia with ninth grade students concerning what their attitudes are toward marriage and the family. All of the girls who responded said they did plan to get married. Of the boys in the study, 10% said they did not plan to marry. Garrison (1966, p. 54) reported finding "Fifty-three percent of the boys stated they expected to marry prior to age twenty-five, whereas 84 percent of the girls stated they expected to marry during this period." The American Council of Life Insurance (1976) reports:

While there are indications . . . that the family is undergoing change, the majority of young people continue to have positive attitudes toward marriage. However, young people appear to be slightly more critical of marriage than they were two years ago (p. 49).

It was also noted that women had more positive attitudes toward marriage than men did. The higher income youth also had more positive views of marriage. Youth from very low income families and drop outs from high school had negative views of marriage (American Council of Life Insurance, 1976).

For those adolescents who do want to marry, how many children do they want to have? In Garrison's study (1966, p. 55) he found, "The largest percent of responses were for two children, although 52% of the boys and 58% of the girls indicated a desire for more than two children."

How do adolescents feel about childless marriages? In the American Council of Life Insurance study (1976) it was reported that the majority of young people accept this concept. Of the respondents, 87% said it was "okay" to decide to have no children. There has been an increase in this view since 1974. Whites were more open to this idea than non-whites.

What do adolescents think about sharing the responsibilities of bringing up the family? In a study done in Washington with juniors and seniors in high school, Geiken (1964, p. 352) found, "The boys indicated that they would be willing to assume responsibility for the care of children. However, the girls expected the boys to assume more responsibility than did the boys themselves." In Garrison's (1966) study he came to the conclusion:

Over 80% of the boys and over 70% of the girls stated that they expected both parents to be equally influential in the in the direction and control of the family. Otherwise, there was a tendency for the boys and girls to expect the male to be more influential (p. 58).

A study was done by Angrist, Mickelsen, and Penna (1976) in four metropolitan high schools to measure adolescents' attitudes and knowledge concerning family life. They found sex roles to lean toward more equalitarian attitudes. They found, also, that sex role conception was strongly affected by sex. Angrist, Mickelsen, and Penna (1976, p. 118) report, "Surprisingly there is no evidence of a relationship

to Sex Role Conception of parental education or mother's employment status." The American Council of Life Insurance (1976, p. 51) found, "Sixty-five percent feel that if a woman has children she shouldn't go to work until they are grown, unless it's an economic necessity, 5 percentage points higher than the proportion who felt that way in 1974." They noted in this study that men more than women were more inclined to feel that women should not work.

Attitudes of Adolescents Toward Parent Education

No research has been found on what adolescents who have never been involved in a parent education program think about such programs. If research has been done in this area, it would appear that it is a small amount of research.

Feedback from students who have been involved in a parent education program is available. Research has shown many positive responses from adolescents who have been involved in parent education classes. The following are comments which have come from students who have been involved in a parent education program.

Weigle (1971, p. 25) reports comments from adolescents who were already mothers. One young mother said, "Discipline . . . now I can cope with the things my little girl does without yelling and hitting." Another says, "I was always puzzled about how I should go about dealing with my child's behavior and now I have a better understanding of it."

Ogg (1975, p. 25) reports these comments from students, "If I become a father, I'll have a better idea of how to raise kids properly."

One girl says, "The children like me for what I am . . . I can be myself here." A young man comments, "I understand everyone better, including myself."

The following are comments from low income, minority youth who participated in a program called "Preparing Teenagers for Parenthood."

Fink (1974) reports these comments from young people:

"This is going to help us when we get older and if we get a family or start a nursery we would know what do do in a bad situation." "It helps me to understand the children I work and live around. It lets me know I can work and play and understand the children. It makes me feel proud to know that I am helpful in many ways." "I like the program because it helps me to learn about sex and how to have a baby and like when you get raped you will know what to do and this program have really learn me something because in school they didn't learn you much that you want to know" (front inside cover).

Conclusion

Is parent education really necessary? From what has been drawn from the literature, it very much appears that way. Parent education could help intervene in such problems as child abuse and neglect, unwed teenage pregnancies, unhealthy babies, and many other social problems. Does not every child deserve a competent, well trained parent? Every child should have the opportunity to develop to his or her full potential. The chances of this occurring is much greater with a prepared parent.

Parent education for adolescents cannot be at it's very best unless they have some input into the program. If the program is not relevant to them, the information will not be integrated into their behavior patterns. There is a need to know what our young people are thinking concerning parent education.

CHAPTER III

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Selection of Subjects

The subjects for this study were individuals who were among the C. E. Donart High School graduating class of 1977 of Stillwater, Oklahoma. Two groups of individuals were used: 1) persons who had taken the Family Living course, which covers some parent education topics, offered at C. E. Donart and who have graduated from C. E. Donart in 1977 and 2) a random sample of persons who had graduated from C. E. Donart High School in 1977. This sample was taken from the C. E. Donart High School Directory. The names of the students were in alphabetical order and each third individual was sent a questionnaire, excluding those who were in the Family Living group.

C. E. Donart does not offer a parent education class, as many high schools do not. A one-semester Family Living class has been offered at C. E. Donart for the last three semesters. In the coming year it will become a two-semester class. The class curriculum has been changed some every semester. Some parent education topics are included in their curriculum. This is the reason this class was chosen to be compared with a group of individuals who had not taken the class. The group of individuals (approximately 40) who took the Family Living class were called by telephone before their questionnaires were sent to them. This group was more responsive to sending

the questionnaire back because of the telephoning beforehand. It was especially important for these individuals to return the questionnaire since there was such a small group of these individuals. A random sample (approximately 100 persons who had not had the Family Living class) was sent the questionnaire and cover letter without any contact beforehand. Fifteen questionnaires were returned with the wrong address written on them. This left a possibility of 135 adolescents who might respond. The number of questionnaires returned and filled out was 53. The number received from the students who had experienced a class dealing with parent education topics was 34. There were 19 questionnaires received from the group who had not experienced the class.

Development of Questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Appendix) was developed by the investigator to obtain the following: 1) perceptions of adolescents toward parent education, 2) adolescents' ideas on what parent education topics should be included in a parent education program, and 3) perceptions of adolescents' attitudes toward parenting in general.

The first part of the questionnaire was developed to obtain background information on the subjects, including: a) sex, b) age, c) religion, d) race, e) marital status, f) number of children, g) socioeconomic status, and h) parents' marital status.

Parent Education was defined on the questionnaire for the subjects by developing a list of topics which may be included in a parent education class. The list of topics was developed from two sources: 1) a list developed by the U.S. Office of Child Development and the

U.S. Office of Education (Kruger, 1973) and 2) a list which Mary B. Lane, Director of the Cross Cultural Family Center in San Francisco and author of Education for Parenting, had formulated. A combination from these two lists was used to formulate the list for this questionnaire. These topics were inclusive of most of the topics which might be offered in a parent education program.

In part two of the questionnaire, questions were formulated to assess adolescents' attitudes toward parent education. Some of these questions were developed to determine how students felt about the Family Living course, which deals with some parent education topics. Following these questions, a list of parent education topics are included. The respondent was asked to evaluate how important he or she felt each topic was to a parent education class. Following this rating of topics, questions are included concerning the adolescents' attitudes toward parenting in general. Some of these questions were concerned with: a) whether or not they wanted to be parents in the future, b) why the number of children they desire, c) who would have the responsibilities of rearing the children, d) whether or not a family should be planned, e) how long after a couple is married should they wait to have children, f) whether or not they want to rear their children like they were reared by their parents, and g) if they do not want children, their reason why.

The questionnaire was tested for content validity by a panel of four experts in the area of this topic. Those serving on the panel were graduate faculty members of the Family Relations and Child Development Department at Oklahoma State University. They were asked to critique the questionnaire using the following questions as guides:

1) Is the question clear? 2) Is the question relevant to the topic being studied? 3) Is the question specific enough? 4) Are additional questions needed? Some suggestions were made by the panel. It was felt that the instrument could be shortened in length. Also, the experts felt there were a few questions that might be offensive. These suggestions were incorporated into the final revision.

The questionnaire was pre-tested by five 1977 C. E. Donart graduates that had been randomly selected from the C. E. Donart student directory. The individuals were called beforehand to get their consent and cooperation. Individuals pre-testing the questionnaire were asked: 1) Are the questions clear? 2) Are any of the questions offensive? 3) Is the questionnaire too long? 4) Are there any suggestions for improvement of the questionnaire? All of those who pre-tested the questionnaire felt it was clear, non-offensive, and an appropriate length.

Analysis of Data

Frequencies and percentages were tabulated on all the information gathered from the questionnaire. The Chi-Square test was used to test the hypotheses.

The data in this study was analyzed by the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) at the Oklahoma State University Computer Center. Frequency and percentage and the Chi-Square test was used to analyze the data for this study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Description of Subjects

The subjects chosen for this study were adolescents who had graduated from C. E. Donart High School in May, 1977. There were 150 questionnaires sent out originally, but 15 of these were returned because of wrong addresses. This left a possibility of 135 adolescents who might respond; however, the total number of questionnaires returned and filled out was 53, which made the return rate 39%. A detailed description of these subjects who returned the questionnaire is presented in Table I.

Forty-nine percent of the respondents were males. Sixty-seven percent of the subjects were 18 years of age. Over 92% of the respondents were of the white race. Approximately 90% of the subjects were classified as single. Only 3% of the respondents had children. Concerning religious preference, 79% of the subjects were of a Protestant faith. Fifty-six percent of the participants considered themselves to be religious.

Over 37% reported they were students. Twenty percent of the participants had white collar jobs. Approximately 54% of the respondents were upper-middle socio-economic status, according to the McGuire-White measurement of social class. It was found that about 79% of their parents were still married for the first time.

TABLE I
 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUBJECTS
 N=53

Variable	Classification	No.	%
Sex	Male	26	49.06
	Female	27	50.94
Age	17	9	16.99
	18	36	67.92
	19	7	13.20
	20	1	1.89
Race	White	49	92.45
	Negro	1	1.89
	Indian	1	1.89
	Mexican-American	1	1.89
	No Response	1	1.88
Marital Status	Single	48	90.57
	Married	5	9.43
Children	Yes	2	3.78
	No	51	96.22
Religious Preference	Catholic	2	3.78
	Mormon	1	1.89
	None	5	9.43
	Protestant	42	79.24
	No Response	2	3.78
	Other	1	1.88
Religious Commitment	Very Religious	5	9.43
	Not Religious	12	22.65
	Religious	30	56.60
	Atheist	1	1.89
	No Response	5	9.43
Socio-Economic Status	Upper Class	1	1.89
	Upper-Middle Class	29	54.71
	Lower-Middle Class	13	24.53
	Upper-Lower Class	10	18.89

TABLE I (Continued)

Variable	Classification	No.	%
Parents Marital Status	Separated or Divorced (with no remarriage)	1	1.89
	One of parents deceased (with no remarriage)	3	5.67
	Divorced (with remarriage) One of parents deceased	6	11.31
	(with remarriage)	1	1.89
	Married (first time)	42	79.24

Perceptions of Adolescents Toward Parent Education

The respondents were asked if they had in the past been enrolled in any program(s) dealing with parent education topics. Table II shows that 64% of the respondents had been enrolled in a program that dealt with some parent education topics. Most of the respondents named the Family Living class as being the source of their coming in contact with parent education topics. Other classes named were Home Economics and Biology. The researcher had hoped to attain a better balance of the two groups, but response was low in the group who had not experienced parent education programs.

When asked if they felt the programs dealing with parent education topics had been beneficial to them, 100% of those having participated in these programs said yes. When respondents were asked if they would recommend these programs to others, again, 100% said yes. The responses to the above two questions are shown in Table III.

TABLE II
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 RESPONDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN PRO-
 GRAMS DEALING WITH PARENT
 EDUCATION TOPICS
 N=53

Participation in Programs Deal- ing with Parent Education	No.	%
Yes	34	64.16
No	19	35.84

TABLE III
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE VALUE
 OF THE PROGRAMS THEY HAD
 COMPLETED
 N=34

Description	No.	%
<u>Program was Beneficial</u>		
Yes	34	100
No	0	0
<u>Would Recommend Program to Others</u>		
Yes	34	100
No	0	0

Respondents were also asked to check from a list specific ways in which they felt the program(s) had been helpful to them. A detailed description of specific ways respondents felt they had benefited by being involved in these programs is located in Table IV. Some of the respondents felt they received valuable information in financial planning. This information was obtained from the open-ended "other" question.

TABLE IV
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF SPECIFIC
 WAYS THE PROGRAMS WERE HELPFUL
 TO THEM
 N=34

Program's Helpfulness With These Topics	No.	%
<u>Understanding Self</u>		
Yes	19	55.88
No	15	44.12
<u>Human Development and Reproduction</u>		
Yes	22	64.71
No	12	35.29
<u>Birth Control</u>		
Yes	24	70.59
No	10	29.41
<u>Family Planning</u>		
Yes	26	76.47
No	8	23.53
<u>Human Sexuality</u>		
Yes	17	50.00
No	17	50.00
<u>Effects of Drugs on Self and Future Children</u>		
Yes	17	50.00
No	17	50.00

TABLE IV (Continued)

<u>Program's Helpfulness With These Topics</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Effects of Alcoholism on Self and Future Children</u>		
Yes	11	32.35
No	23	67.65
<u>Effects of V.D. on Self and Future Children</u>		
Yes	22	64.71
No	12	35.29
<u>Different Lifestyles</u>		
Yes	16	47.06
No	18	52.94
<u>Pregnancy and Prenatal Development</u>		
Yes	22	64.71
No	12	35.29
<u>Infant Care</u>		
Yes	18	52.94
No	16	47.06
<u>Children's Developmental Needs</u>		
Yes	21	61.76
No	13	38.24
<u>Responsibilities of Parenthood (guidance, discipline, nutrition, health, and safety)</u>		
Yes	23	67.65
No	11	32.35
<u>Careers Related to Working with Children</u>		
Yes	6	17.65
No	28	82.35
<u>Experience in Working with Children</u>		
Yes	5	14.71
No	29	85.29

Table V shows the responses of the subjects who were involved in programs dealing with parent education topics. When asked what improvements could be made in programs dealing with parent education topics offered at their school, the following information was obtained. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents suggested more time be given to parent education topics. Approximately 29% of the respondents felt more parent education topics should be added to the curriculum. In response to the open-ended question, three more categories evolved, including the following: 1) more classes be made available, 2) make students more aware of existing programs, and 3) more classes with males and females included.

Those respondents who did not take any kind of program dealing with parent education topics were asked why they did not enroll in the Family Living or Home Economics classes offered by the school. Table VI shows all of the responses.

A list of parent education topics was included in the beginning of part two of the questionnaire. All of the subjects were asked if they would have liked to have been involved in a parent education program (using some or all of the topics listed at the beginning of part two) while they were attending high school. Approximately 75% of the respondents from C. E. Donart High School said yes. Table VII shows all of the responses.

When the subjects were asked if they felt parent education could be valuable to every person in our society, 54% strongly agreed and 35% agreed. The results can be seen in Table VIII. The results were calculated separately for the two groups; 1) those who had some type of program in which parent education topics were covered will be

TABLE V
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF IMPROVE-
 MENTS THAT COULD BE MADE IN
 EXISTING PROGRAMS
 N=34

Possible Improvements	No	%
<u>Additional Topics</u>		
Yes	10	29.41
No	22	64.71
No Response	2	5.88
<u>Different Teaching Methods</u>		
Yes	7	20.59
No	25	73.52
No Response	2	5.88
<u>More Time Given to Parent Education Topics</u>		
Yes	13	38.24
No	19	55.88
No Response	2	5.88
<u>Course Dealing with Parent Education Topics Only</u>		
Yes	6	17.65
No	26	76.47
No Response	2	5.88
<u>No Improvements Needed</u>		
Yes	6	17.65
No	26	76.47
No Response	2	5.88

TABLE VI

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
RESPONDENTS' REASONS FOR NOT EN-
ROLLING IN THE FAMILY LIVING
OR HOME ECONOMICS CLASSES
N=19

<u>Reasons for Not Enrolling in the Family Living or Home Economics Classes</u>	No.	%
<u>Not Interested</u>		
Yes	11	57.89
No	8	42.11
<u>Offered at Bad Time</u>		
Yes	2	10.53
No	17	89.47
<u>No Room in Schedule</u>		
Yes	3	15.79
No	16	84.21
<u>Did Not Know About</u>		
Yes	3	15.79
No	16	84.21
<u>Limited Enrollment, Couldn't Get Into Class</u>		
Yes	2	10.53
No	17	89.47

TABLE VII

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
RESPONDENTS' DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE
IN A PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM
WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL
N=53

<u>Would Like to Participate in Parent Education Program</u>	No.	%
Yes	40	75.47
No	12	22.64
No Response	1	1.89

TABLE VIII

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF HOW VAL-
 UABLE PARENT EDUCATION COULD BE TO
 EVERY PERSON IN SOCIETY

Parent Education Could Be Valuable to All Society	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Strongly Agree	23	67.65	6	31.58	29	54.72
Agree	10	29.41	9	47.37	19	35.85
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	0	0	2	10.53	2	3.77
Undecided	1	2.94	1	5.26	2	3.77
No Response	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89

referred to as the experienced group, and 2) those respondents who had no experience with parent education topics in school will be referred to as the non-experienced group throughout the study.

Adolescents' Ideas on What Topics Are
 Needed in a Parent Education Program

Topics which could be included in a parent education program were listed for the subjects. They were asked to tell how important each topic was to a parent education program. Table IX shows in detail how important the respondents from both groups felt the topics were to a parent education program.

Possible methods for teaching a parent education class were listed for the respondents. They were asked to answer as to how important

TABLE IX

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
SUBJECTS' RATINGS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF
TOPICS THAT COULD BE INCLUDED IN A
PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Topics That Could be Included in a Parent Education Program	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Understanding Self</u>						
Very Important	22	64.71	16	84.21	38	71.70
Important	10	29.41	3	15.79	13	24.53
Not Important	2	5.88	0	0	2	3.77
<u>Human Development and Reproduction</u>						
Very Important	24	70.59	7	36.84	31	58.49
Important	9	26.47	10	52.63	19	35.85
Not Important	1	2.94	2	10.53	3	5.66
<u>Birth Control</u>						
Very Important	28	82.35	12	63.16	40	75.77
Important	3	8.82	6	31.58	9	16.98
Not Important	3	8.82	1	5.26	4	7.55
<u>Family Planning</u>						
Very Important	27	79.41	11	57.89	38	71.70
Important	6	17.65	7	36.84	13	24.53
Not Important	1	2.94	1	5.26	2	3.77
<u>Human Sexuality</u>						
Very Important	14	41.18	5	26.32	19	35.85
Important	18	52.94	12	63.16	30	56.60
Not Important	2	5.88	2	10.52	4	7.58
<u>Effects of Drugs on Self and Future Children</u>						
Very Important	26	76.47	16	84.21	42	79.25
Important	8	23.53	3	15.79	11	20.75
Not Important	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Effects of Alcoholism on Self and Future Children</u>						
Very Important	25	73.53	16	84.21	41	77.36
Important	9	26.47	3	15.79	12	22.64
Not Important	0	0	0	0	0	0

TABLE IX (Continued)

Topics That Could be Included in a Parent Education Program	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Effects of V.D. on Self and Future Children</u>						
Very Important	29	85.29	16	84.21	45	84.91
Important	4	11.76	2	10.53	6	11.32
Not Important	1	2.94	1	5.26	2	3.77
<u>Different Lifestyles</u>						
Very Important	6	17.65	3	15.79	9	16.98
Important	15	44.12	13	68.42	28	52.83
Not Important	13	38.24	2	10.53	15	28.30
No Response	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89
<u>Pregnancy and Prenatal Development</u>						
Very Important	28	82.35	7	36.84	35	66.04
Important	4	11.75	12	63.15	16	30.19
Not Important	2	5.88	0	0	2	3.77
<u>Infant Care</u>						
Very Important	29	85.29	11	57.89	40	75.47
Important	4	11.76	7	36.84	11	20.76
Not Important	1	2.94	1	5.26	2	3.77
<u>Developmental Needs of Children</u>						
Very Important	29	85.29	13	68.42	42	79.25
Important	5	14.71	6	31.58	11	20.75
Not Important	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Responsibilities of Being a Parent</u>						
Very Important	30	88.24	16	84.21	46	86.79
Important	4	11.76	3	15.79	7	13.21
Not Important	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Careers Related to Working with Children</u>						
Very Important	6	17.65	5	26.32	11	20.75
Important	21	61.76	9	46.37	30	56.61
Not Important	7	20.59	5	26.32	12	22.64

TABLE IX (Continued)

Topics That Could be Included in a Parent Education Program	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Work Experience with Children</u>						
Very Important	8	23.53	4	21.05	12	22.64
Important	17	50.00	12	63.16	29	54.72
Not Important	8	23.53	3	15.79	11	20.75
No Response	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89

they felt each teaching method would be to a parent education program.

Table X shows how the subjects responded.

Respondents also suggested possible teaching tools for parent education classes might be video tapes, films, filmstrips, home visits, on the job training, the study of TA, and guest speakers.

Adolescents' Attitudes Toward Parenting

Respondents were asked what kind of experiences they had been involved in with young children. The results showed that 83% had babysat in the past. Table XI shows the responses in detail.

Table XII shows the subjects' responses when asked if they would feel prepared and competent to be a parent in the near future. Sixty percent of the adolescents said they would not.

The results of the study showed that 50% of the respondents wished to bring up their children as their parents brought them up. Thirty percent of the subjects did not want to bring up their children as

TABLE X
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 SUBJECTS' RATINGS OF POSSIBLE TEACHING
 METHODS FOR PARENT EDUCATION
 PROGRAMS

Possible Teaching Methods for Parent Education Programs	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Child Development Lab, Day Care Center, etc., to Observe and Work with Children</u>						
Very Important	12	35.29	7	36.84	19	35.85
Important	16	47.06	10	52.63	26	49.06
Not Important	6	17.65	2	10.53	8	15.09
<u>Lecture</u>						
Very Important	5	14.71	3	15.79	8	15.09
Important	17	50.00	10	52.63	27	50.94
Not Important	12	35.29	6	31.58	18	33.96
<u>Role Playing</u>						
Very Important	18	23.53	4	21.05	22	41.51
Important	11	32.35	9	47.37	20	37.74
Not Important	5	14.71	4	21.05	9	16.98
No Response	0	0	2	10.53	2	3.77
<u>Group Discussions</u>						
Very Important	22	64.71	10	52.63	32	60.38
Important	10	29.41	7	36.84	17	32.08
Not Important	2	5.88	0	0	2	3.77
No Response	0	0	2	10.53	2	3.77
<u>Textbooks</u>						
Very Important	7	20.59	4	21.05	11	20.75
Important	17	50.00	10	52.63	27	50.94
Not Important	10	29.41	3	15.79	13	24.53
No Response	0	0	2	10.53	2	3.77

TABLE XI
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 EXPERIENCE RESPONDENTS HAVE HAD
 WITH CHILDREN

Experience with Children	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Babysitting</u>						
Yes	31	91.18	13	68.42	44	83.02
No	3	8.82	5	26.32	8	15.09
No Response	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89
<u>Caring for Own Child</u>						
Yes	2	5.88	0	0	2	3.77
No	32	94.12	18	94.74	50	94.34
No Response	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89
<u>Tutor</u>						
Yes	3	8.82	3	15.79	6	11.32
No	31	91.18	15	78.95	46	86.79
No Response	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89
<u>Caring for Younger Brothers & Sisters</u>						
Yes	16	47.06	9	47.37	25	47.17
No	18	52.94	9	47.37	27	50.94
No Response	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89
<u>Camp Counselor</u>						
Yes	2	5.88	3	15.79	5	9.43
No	32	94.12	15	78.95	47	88.68
No Response	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89
<u>No Experience</u>						
Yes	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89
No	34	100.00	17	89.47	51	96.23
No Response	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89
<u>Other Volunteer or Paid Work with Children</u>						
Yes	8	23.53	3	15.79	11	20.75
No	26	76.47	15	78.95	41	77.36
No Response	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89

TABLE XII
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF HOW PRE-
 PARED THEY WOULD FEEL TO BE
 PARENTS IN THE NEAR
 FUTURE

Would Feel Prepared and Competent to be Parents	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	15	44.12	4	21.05	19	35.85
No	19	55.88	14	73.68	33	62.26
No Response	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89

their parents brought them up. Also, 15% of the respondents were undecided. In Table XIII the above information is shown.

The study tried to determine why adolescents want to be future parents. A little over 73% of the respondents said the reason they wanted to be a parent was to be able to experience the joys and satisfactions of being a parent. Approximately 52% of the subjects checked the category of wanting to love, nurture, and guide another human being to adulthood. All of the responses to this question are in Table XIV.

Other reasons written by the respondents in the other category consisted of religious reasons, not being sure about wanting children yet, and wanting to adopt children. Because the percentages were so small, they were not added to the table. The table does not equal 100% because the respondents had multiple answers.

There were 10 subjects who responded that they did not want children in the future. They were asked why they had come to that conclusion. The respondents marked various reasons which can be seen in

TABLE XIII

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF BRINGING UP
THEIR FUTURE CHILDREN AS THEIR
PARENTS BROUGHT THEM UP

Would Like to Bring Children Up Like Par- ents Brought Me Up	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	17	50.00	10	52.63	27	50.94
No	10	29.41	6	31.58	16	30.19
Undecided	6	17.65	2	10.53	8	15.10
No Response	1	2.94	1	5.26	2	3.77

TABLE XIV

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF WHY THEY
WANT TO BE FUTURE PARENTS

Reasons for Wanting to be a Future Parent	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Do Not Want Children</u>						
Yes	6	17.65	4	21.05	10	18.87
No	27	79.41	15	78.95	42	79.24
No Response	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89
<u>Replenish the Population</u>						
Yes	0	0	0	0	0	0
No	33	97.06	19	100.00	52	98.11
No Response	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89
<u>Create Human Life</u>						
Yes	7	20.59	3	15.79	10	18.87
No	26	76.47	16	84.21	42	79.24
No Response	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89

TABLE XIV (Continued)

Reasons for Wanting to be a Future Parent	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Have Someone to Love</u>						
Yes	13	38.24	5	26.32	18	33.96
No	20	58.82	14	73.68	34	64.15
No Response	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89
<u>To Love, Nurture, and Guide Another Human Being to Adulthood</u>						
Yes	20	58.82	8	42.11	28	52.83
No	13	38.24	11	57.89	24	45.28
No Response	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89
<u>To Have Someone Dependent on Me</u>						
Yes	4	11.76	2	10.53	6	11.32
No	29	85.29	17	89.47	46	86.79
No Response	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89
<u>To Experience the Joys and Satisfactions of Being a Parent</u>						
Yes	24	70.59	15	78.95	39	73.58
No	9	26.47	4	21.05	13	24.53
No Response	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89
<u>To Carry on the Family Name</u>						
Yes	4	11.76	6	31.58	10	18.87
No	26	76.47	16	84.21	42	79.24
No Response	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89
<u>To Complete the Marriage Relationship</u>						
Yes	4	11.76	6	31.58	10	18.87
No	27	79.41	15	78.95	42	79.24
No Response	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89

Table XV. The reasons the respondents gave most frequently for not wanting to be parents were: 1) they would feel restricted and 2) that they did not wish to add to the over-population.

TABLE XV
REASONS WHY RESPONDENTS DO NOT WANT
CHILDREN

Reasons for Not Wanting Children	Experienced No.	Non-Experienced No.	Total N=10
<u>Don't Care for Children</u>	0	1	1
<u>Not Patient Enough</u>	3	1	4
<u>Would Feel Restricted, Not Enough Freedom</u>	5	4	9
<u>Do Not Want Responsibility of Children</u>	3	1	4
<u>Do Not Want to Add to Over-Population</u>	2	5	7

Respondents were asked how many children they wanted in the future. It was found that the majority of the subjects wanted two children. All of the responses are shown in Table XVI.

Respondents were asked to report why they wanted the number of children they said they wanted in the future. A detailed description of the responses is in Table XVII.

TABLE XVI
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 HOW MANY CHILDREN RESPONDENTS WANT
 IN THE FUTURE

Number of Children Wanted in the Future	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
None	6	17.65	4	21.05	10	18.87
One	5	14.71	0	0	5	9.43
Two	16	47.06	12	63.16	28	52.83
Three	6	17.65	1	5.26	7	13.21
Four	1	2.94	1	5.26	2	3.77
No Response	0	0	1	5.26	1	1.89

TABLE XVII
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF WHY THEY
 WANT NUMBER OF CHILDREN THEY
 HAVE INDICATED
 N=53

Reasons Why Respondents Want Number of Children They Have Indicated	No.	%
<u>Financially Right Number</u>		
Yes	9	16.98
No	35	66.04
No Response	9	16.98
<u>Sibling Relationship is Important</u>		
Yes	11	20.76
No	33	62.26
No Response	9	16.98

TABLE XVII (Continued)

Reasons Why Respondents Want Number of Children They Have Indicated	No.	%
<u>Do Not Want to Over-Populate</u>		
Yes	15	28.30
No	29	54.72
No Response	9	16.98
<u>Easy Number to Handle</u>		
Yes	3	5.66
No	41	77.36
No Response	9	16.98
<u>Do Not Want Children</u>		
Yes	5	9.43
No	39	73.59
No Response	9	16.98
<u>Would Like to Adopt</u>		
Yes	2	3.77
No	42	79.25
No Response	9	16.98
<u>Undecided</u>		
Yes	1	1.89
No	43	81.13
No Response	9	16.98
<u>Don't Want Just One Child</u>		
Yes	6	11.32
No	38	71.70
No Response	9	16.98
<u>Want One Girl, One Boy</u>		
Yes	3	5.66
No	41	77.36
No Response	9	16.98
<u>Don't Want Big Family</u>		
Yes	3	5.66
No	41	77.36
No Response	9	16.98

TABLE XVII (Continued)

Reasons Why Respondents Want Number of Children They Have Indicated	No.	%
<u>Like Children</u>		
Yes	3	5.66
No	41	77.36
No Response	9	16.98
<u>Proper Amount of Love and Attention Can be Given with this Number</u>		
Yes	2	3.77
No	42	79.25
No Response	9	16.98

The subjects were asked when they felt was the right time to have children. Forty-three percent of the respondents chose the 24-27 age bracket. Table XVIII contains all the information concerning their responses.

All the respondents who answered felt like parenthood (when to have children) should be planned. This is shown in detail in Table XIX.

How long should a couple wait to have their first baby after they are married? The subjects were asked this question. In Table XX the responses to this question are shown in detail.

The respondents were asked to give reasons why they would delay parenthood. The reasons the participants gave were varied. The

TABLE XVIII

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE RIGHT
AGE TO HAVE CHILDREN

Right Age to Be- come a Parent	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
16-19	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89
20-23	12	35.29	4	21.05	16	30.19
24-27	14	41.18	9	47.37	23	43.40
28-31	1	2.94	4	21.05	5	9.43
32 and above	3	8.82	2	10.53	5	9.43
Undecided	3	8.82	0	0	3	5.66

TABLE XIX

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF IF
PARENTHOOD SHOULD BE PLANNED

Should Parenthood (When to Have Children) be Planned?	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	33	97.06	17	89.47	50	94.34
No	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Response	1	2.94	2	10.53	3	5.66

TABLE XX
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF HOW
 LONG A COUPLE SHOULD WAIT TO
 HAVE THEIR FIRST BABY

How Long Should a Couple Wait to Have Their First Baby?	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1 Year	7	20.59	2	10.53	9	16.98
2 Years	7	20.59	2	10.53	9	16.98
3 Years	5	14.71	4	21.05	9	16.98
4 Years	4	11.76	1	5.26	5	9.43
5 Years	0	0	3	15.79	3	5.66
6 Years or Longer	3	8.82	0	0	3	5.66
Depends Upon Circumstances	6	17.65	6	31.58	12	22.64
No Response	2	3.77	1	5.26	3	5.66

following are reasons they gave: financially the right time, time to get to know each other, time to get the marriage established, depends on parents' choice and to make sure they want children.

When respondents were asked who should be responsible for bringing up the children, 94% of the subjects said they felt both the mother and the father together should be responsible. Table XXI shows all the information the respondents gave.

Examination of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1B. There is no significant difference between adolescents who experienced programs concerned with parent education and

TABLE XXI
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF WHO
 SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR
 BRINGING UP THE CHILDREN

Who Should be Respon- sible for Bringing Up the Children?	Experienced N=34		Non-Experienced N=19		Total N=53	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Father	1	2.94	0	0	1	1.89
Mother	0	0	0	0	0	0
Both Father & Mother	32	94.12	18	94.74	50	94.34
No Response	1	2.94	1	5.26	2	3.77

those adolescents who did not experience these kinds of programs according to sex.

A Chi-Square test showed that there was a significant relationship (p is less than .03) between involvement in a parent education and the sex of the respondent. There were 39.6% of the females who had been involved in a program concerning parent education compared with 24.5% of the males (Table XXII).

The Chi-Square analysis utilized to examine all other hypotheses and it was determined that the respondents' experience in parent education programs was not significantly associated with the following: (I-A) How prepared to be future parents, (I-C) Socio-economic class, (I-D) Race, (I-E) Religious preference, (I-F) Religious commitment, (I-G) Marital status, (I-H) Incidence of children, (I-I) Incidence of experience with children, (I-J) Parent model presented by parents.

TABLE XXII

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN
INVOLVEMENT IN A PROGRAM DEALING WITH
PARENT EDUCATION ACCORDING TO SEX

Sex of Respondent	<u>Involvement in Parent Education</u>		χ^2	Level of Significance
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>		
	No.	No.		
Male	13	13	4.5	.03
Female	21	6		

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

The purposes of this study were to obtain the following: 1) perceptions of adolescents' attitudes toward parent education, 2) adolescents' ideas of what topics should be included in a parent education program, and 3) adolescents' attitudes toward parenting in general. A questionnaire, developed by the investigator, was used to gather the data.

Fifty-three adolescents who graduated from C. E. Donart High School, Stillwater, Oklahoma, in May, 1977 were the participants for this study. There were 26 males and 27 females. Ninety-two percent of the subjects were of white race and approximately 90% were single. There were two groups: 1) respondents who had experienced programs which included parent education topics (Experienced Group) and 2) respondents who had not had this experience (Non-Experienced Group).

The following is a summary of the research findings. One of the purposes of the study was to gather data on adolescents' perceptions toward parent education. It may be noted that in this study 64% of the subjects had been involved in a program dealing with some parent education topics. The reason for this high percentage is the fact that the investigator obtained a special list from the Family Living teacher

to be sure that at least half of the subjects would be those who had been involved in some kind of parent education. This group of students having been involved in a Family Living class were telephoned before a questionnaire was sent to them. The investigator would like to point out that normally a random sample of students would not show so many students having been involved in a program dealing with parent education topics. One hundred percent of the adolescents having taken programs dealing with parent education topics felt the programs were beneficial to them and would recommend the programs to others. The above subjects were asked to check parent education topics they felt they had been helped to understand better through the programs in which they had been involved. Family planning was checked the most frequently (76%) and then, birth control (70%). Responsibilities of parenthood was marked by 67% of the respondents. Others marked frequently (64%) were human development and reproduction, effects of V.D. on self and future children, and pregnancy and prenatal development. Other topics were checked at lower percentage rates. When all the subjects, those having been involved in a parent education program and those who had not, were asked if they would have liked to have been involved in a parent education class while attending high school, 75% said yes. When the subjects were asked if they felt parent education could be valuable to every person in our society, 54% strongly agreed and 35% agreed.

Another purpose of the study was to find out what topics adolescents felt should be included in a parent education program. Respondents rated possible topics for a parent education class. Subjects

rated the following topics in the very important category: responsibilities of being a parent (guidance, discipline, nutrition, health, and safety) (86%), effects of V.D. on self and future children (84%), effects of drugs on self and future children (79%), effects of alcoholism on self and future children (77%), birth control and infant care (75%), understanding self (71%), pregnancy and prenatal development (66%), human development and reproduction (58%), and other topics at a lower percentage rate.

To find out adolescents' attitudes toward parenting in general was another purpose of this study. It was found that 83% of the subjects had experience with children in the form of babysitting and 47% in the form of caring for younger brothers and sisters. When respondents were asked if they would feel prepared and competent to be parents in the near future only 35% said yes. When analyzing the two groups, the Experienced Group more often (44.12% responded they would be prepared and competent to be parents. The Non-Experienced Group had only (21.05%) who felt they were prepared and competent to be parents. The results of the study also showed approximately 50% of the subjects responded that they would like to bring their children up as their parents had brought them up. When the subjects were asked to tell why they wanted to be future parents, 73% said to be able to experience the joys and satisfactions of being a parent and 52% said to be able to love, nurture, and guide another human being into adulthood. The respondents did not choose as often: 1) replenishing the population, 2) having someone dependent upon them, 3) carrying on the family name, or 4) completing the marriage relationship and creating human life. Over 52% of the participants in this study wanted two

children. The reasons why the respondents wanted a particular number of children varied. The results of the study indicate that 43% of the subjects felt that between the ages of 24 and 27 was the right age to become a parent. All of the subjects who responded felt like the time in which to have children should be planned. Ninety-six percent of the respondents felt the mother and father both should be responsible for rearing their children.

The Chi-Square test was used to analyze the hypotheses. Evidence was found to suggest there was a significant relationship (p is less than .03) between involvement in parent education and the sex of the respondent with females having more experience with parent education programs than males. No significant relationships were found between involvement in a program dealing with parent education and how prepared one felt to be a parent, socio-economic status, race, religious preference, religious commitment, marital status, incidence of children, experience with children, and parent model presented.

Implications of the Study

The results of this study show a desire by adolescents in both groups for parent education programs. The adolescents who have been involved in programs where parent education topics have been dealt with have all said they had benefited from them. Results of the study show a need for more time to be spent on parent education topics. A variety of teaching methods should be used to teach this class, including: 1) group discussions, 2) a child development lab, 3) role playing, 4) textbooks, and 5) lecture. The following topics should be given

top priority according to the respondents in this study:

- 1) Responsibilities of being a parent (guidance, discipline, child nutrition, health, safety, etc.)
- 2) Effects of V.D.
- 3) Effects of drugs and alcoholism on self and future children
- 4) Developmental needs of children
- 5) Birth control
- 6) Infant care
- 7) Understanding self
- 8) Family planning
- 9) Pregnancy and prenatal development and human development and reproduction

Topics given second priority should be:

- 1) Human sexuality
- 2) Work experience with children
- 3) Careers related to working with children
- 4) Different lifestyles

Parent education classes should encourage both males and females to participate. The results of the study showed more females involved in parent education programs. Parent education classes should be designed so males feel very accepted and wanted.

This study could be especially valuable to Home Economics and Family Living teachers trying to establish a parent education class or incorporate parent education topics into some of their regular classes.

Recommendations for Future Study

The investigator presents the following suggestions as a result of this study:

- 1) A larger sample of adolescents to insure a more valid assessment of adolescents' attitudes toward parent education.
- 2) The instrument be refined to improve its usefulness. Possibly shorten the length of the questionnaire by taking out questions on parenting in general.
- 3) Add an interviewing component to the instrument.
- 4) A similar study be made in several schools to check to see if geographic region has any special bearing.
- 5) Pre-test and post-test a group of adolescents who take a parent education class (a class that deals only with parent education topics).

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APPENDIXES

August 7, 1977
130 Redwood Dr.
Stillwater, OK 74074

Dear Gary:

First of all, I want to say thank you for consenting to fill out this questionnaire. It is very much appreciated.

The questionnaire should take about twenty minutes to complete. There is a sheet attached to the back of the questionnaire with an evaluation of the questionnaire. If you could fill this out, also, it would be very helpful to me in improving my questionnaire for later questionnaire participants.

I am a graduate student in Family Relations and Child Development. The questionnaire deals with your attitudes toward education for parenting and general attitudes about parenting. With this research, it is hoped that better programs can be developed to fit the needs of high school students.

A self-addressed and stamped return envelope is enclosed for your convenience. When filling out the questionnaire, remember there are no wrong or right answers. Answer how you feel. No name is required. Your identify will not be known. Please return the questionnaire and evaluation by August 14. Thank you so much!

Sincerely,

Tanna K. Strom

Enclosure

Evaluation of Questionnaire

1. Were the questions clear to you? Yes No

If you answered no, then write down the question numbers of the questions that were not clear to you. _____

2. Were any of the questions offensive? Yes No

If you answered yes, then write down the question numbers of the questions that were offensive to you. _____

3. Is the questionnaire too long? Yes No

4. Are there any suggestions for improvement of the questionnaire?
If so, write them below.

August 20, 1977
130 Redwood Drive
Stillwater, OK 74074

Dear Tim:

First of all, I want to say thank you for consenting to fill out this questionnaire. It is very much appreciated.

I am a graduate student in Family Relations and Child Development at Oklahoma State University. The questionnaire deals with your attitudes toward education for parenting and general attitudes about parenting. With this research, it is hoped that better programs can be developed to fit the needs of high school students.

The questionnaire should take about twenty minutes to complete. A self-addressed and stamped return envelope is enclosed for your convenience. When filling out the questionnaire, remember there are no wrong or right answers. Answer how you feel. No name is required. Please return the questionnaire by August 29, 1977. Thank you so much!

Sincerely,

Tanna K. Strom

Enclosure

August 20, 1977
130 Redwood Drive
Stillwater, OK 74074

Dear Diana:

I am a graduate student in Family Relations and Child Development at Oklahoma State University. I am trying to locate 1977 C. E. Donart graduates who would be willing to fill out a questionnaire concerning attitudes toward education for parenting and attitudes toward parenting in general. With this research it is hoped that better programs can be developed to fit the needs of high school students.

I would so much appreciate it if you would be willing to fill this questionnaire out. The questionnaire takes approximately twenty minutes to complete. There are no wrong or right answers. Your name is not required.

A self-addressed and stamped return envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Please return the questionnaire by August 29, 1977. Thank you so much!

Sincerely yours,

Tanna K. Strom

Enclosure

GENERAL INFORMATION

Part 1

Your cooperation in filling out this questionnaire is very much appreciated. Hopefully, through information gained from this kind of questionnaire, programs can be designed to fit the needs of young people. Please check or fill in the answers appropriate to each question. Since your name is not required, please be as honest in your answers as possible.

1. Sex: Male
 Female
2. Age: (write in)
3. Race: White
 Negro
 Indian
 Other (write in)
4. Marital Status:
 Single
 Married
 Divorced
5. Do you have children: yes no. If so, how many?
6. What is your religious preference? (optional)
 Catholic Mormon Protestant (Baptist, Methodist, Christian, etc.)
 Jewish None Other (write in)
7. Indicate below your degree of religious orientation: (optional)
 Very Religious Religious
 Not Religious Atheist (anti-religious)
8. Occupation of self: (write in)
9. Occupation of parents:
Father Please describe fully.
Mother Please describe fully.
(If both work, please include both occupations.)

10. Education level completed by your Mother and Father:

<u>Mother</u>	<u>Father</u>	
_____	_____	Less than grade 8
_____	_____	Attended high school but did not finish
_____	_____	Graduated from high school
_____	_____	Attended college for 2 years or more
_____	_____	Graduated from 4 years of college
_____	_____	Attended graduate school

11. What is the primary source of your family's income?

_____ Inherited savings and investments

_____ Earned wealth, transferable investments

_____ Profits, royalties, fees

_____ Salary, commissions (regular, monthly, yearly)

_____ Hourly wages, weekly checks

_____ Odd jobs, seasonal work, private charity

_____ Public relief or charity

_____ Don't know

12. What is your parents' marital status?

_____ Living together

_____ Separated or Divorced (with no remarriage)

_____ One of parents deceased (with no remarriage)

_____ Divorced (with remarriage)

_____ One of parents deceased (with remarriage)

_____ Married (first time)

Part 2

The following part of the questionnaire will deal with questions concerning your attitudes toward parent education and parenting in general. The term parent education includes the following concepts:

1. Understanding self better (determining values, setting of personal goals, etc.)
 2. Acquiring knowledge about human development and reproduction, birth control, family planning, human sexuality, etc.
 3. Becoming aware of the affects of drugs, alcoholism, and V.D. on self and future children.
 4. Learning about different styles of life (single, one-parent, communal living, etc.)
 5. Becoming better prepared for parenthood--this includes pregnancy and prenatal development, infant care, developmental needs of children (which includes emotional, social, physical, and the intellectual needs of children), responsibilities of being a parent (guidance, discipline, child nutrition, health, and safety, etc.)
 6. Becoming more acquainted with careers related to working with children.
 7. Working with young children (outside of the classroom in a nursery school, day care center, etc.).
13. Have you in the past been enrolled in any program(s) concerning parent education topics at your high school? yes no.
(Parent education refers to the 7 topics listed above.)
*Special Note--If you answered yes to question #13, then please fill out questions 14-17. If you answered the question no, then leave blank questions 14-17 and go directly to #18.
14. Did you feel the program(s) you were involved in was (were) beneficial to you? yes no.
15. Describe the course(s) or programs you were involved in concerning parent education topics. _____

16. Would you recommend this (these) program(s) to others?
 yes no

17. In what ways do you feel the program(s) was (were) helpful to you?

- _____ Understand self better
- _____ Understand human development and reproduction better
- _____ More knowledge about birth control
- _____ More aware of family planning
- _____ Better understanding of human sexuality (femininity, masculinity)
- _____ More aware of the effects of drugs on self and future children
- _____ More aware of the effects of alcoholism on self and future children
- _____ More aware of the effects of V.D. on self and future children
- _____ More aware of different lifestyles
- _____ Understand pregnancy and prenatal development better
- _____ Greater knowledge in the area of infant care
- _____ Understand children's developmental needs better (social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of children)
- _____ More aware of responsibilities of being a parent (guidance and discipline, child nutrition, health, and safety, etc.)
- _____ More aware of careers related to working with children
- _____ Opportunity to gain experience in working with children
- _____ Other (write in) _____

18. Improvements that could be made in the program(s) concerning parent education topics offered at my school are:

- _____ Additional topics (please specify) _____
- _____ Different teaching methods (explain) _____
- _____
- _____ More time given to parent education topics

_____ Course dealing with parent education topics only

_____ Other (write in) _____

_____ No improvements needed

19. If you answered no to question #13, then answer this question. If you answered yes, then leave this question blank.

Why did you not enroll in the Family Living or Home Economics class(es) offered at your school?

_____ Not interested

_____ Did not know about it

_____ Offered at a bad time

_____ Limited enrollment,
couldn't get into the
class

_____ Other (write in) _____

*Special Note: All persons should complete the rest of the questionnaire.

20. Would like to have been involved in a parent education program (using some or all of the topics listed at the beginning of Part 2 of the questionnaire) while you were attending high school?

_____ Yes

_____ No

21. Topics that could be included in a parent education program are listed below. Circle a number beside each topic which describes how important you feel this topic is to a parent education program you would like to take part in. The following shows what each number means:

1 - Very Important

2 - Important

3 - Not Important

Understanding self 1 2 3

Human Development and Reproduction 1 2 3

Birth Control 1 2 3

Family Planning 1 2 3

Human Sexuality (femininity, masculinity) 1 2 3

Effects of drugs on self and future children 1 2 3

Effects of alcoholism on self and future children 1 2 3

Effects of V.D. on self and future children 1 2 3

Different lifestyles 1 2 3

Pregnancy and prenatal development 1 2 3

Infant care 1 2 3

Developmental needs of children (social emotional, physical, and intellectual needs) 1 2 3

Responsibilities of being a parent (guidance and discipline, child nutrition, health, and safety, etc.) 1 2 3

Awareness of careers related to working with children 1 2 3

Work experience with young children (outside of the classroom in a nursery school, day care center, etc.) 1 2 3

Other topics you feel are very important (write in) _____

22. Methods that could be used to teach a parent education program are listed below. Put a 1 on the blanks by those you feel are very important, a 2 by those that are important, and a 3 by those that you feel are not important.

_____ Use of a child development lab, nursery school or day care center to observe and work with children

_____ Use of lectures _____ Use of group discussions

_____ Use of role playing _____ Use of textbooks

_____ Other (write in) _____

23. Do you feel parent education could be valuable to every person in our society?

_____ Strongly agree _____ Agree _____ Undecided

_____ Strongly disagree _____ Disagree

24. What kind of experiences have you had in working with young children? Mark as many as you need to.

_____ Babysitting _____ Caring for younger brothers and sisters

_____ Caring for own child

_____ Tutor _____ Camp counselor

_____ None

_____ Other (write in) _____

25. If you were to find out you were going to be a parent in the near future, would you feel prepared and competent? _____yes _____no

26. Do you want to bring up your children (if you have any in the future) like your parents have brought you up? _____yes _____no

27. Why do you want to be a future parent?

_____ Do not want children, question does not apply to me

_____ To replenish to population

_____ To create human life

_____ To carry on the family name

_____ To have someone to love

_____ To love, nurture, and guide another human being to adulthood

_____ To complete the marriage relationship

_____ To have someone dependent on me

_____ To experience the joys and satisfactions of being a parent

_____ Other (write in) _____

28. If you decided you do not want children in the future, then check the appropriate blanks for the reasons why you do not want children. Check as many as you need to. If you do want children, then leave this question blank.

_____ Don't care for children

_____ Feel I am not patient enough

_____ Would feel restricted, not enough freedom

_____ Do not want the responsibility of children

_____ Do not want to add to the growing population

_____ Other (write in) _____

29. How many children do you want in the future? _____
Reason for your answer _____

30. When do you feel is the right age to become a parent?
_____ 16-19 _____ 20-23 _____ 24-27 _____ 28-31 _____ 32 & above
31. Do you feel parenthood (when to have children) should be planned?
_____ Yes _____ No
32. How long should a couple wait to have their first baby after
they are married? _____
Reason(s) for your answer _____

33. The responsibilities of parenthood (bringing up the children)
should be designated to:
_____ Father
_____ Both--Father & Mother
_____ Mother

*Special Note: If you have any comments concerning parenting
or parent education you may write them below. Thank you for
taking the time to fill this questionnaire out.

VITA²

Tanna Renee Kopp Strom

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: ADOLESCENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD PARENT EDUCATION

Major Field: Family Relations and Child Development

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Perry, Oklahoma, June 25, 1953, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Kopp, Jr.; married June 1, 1973, to Morris D. Strom in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Education: Graduated from Morrison High School, Morrison, Oklahoma, in May, 1971. Attended Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, from 1971 to 1976; received a Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics from Oklahoma State University in 1976; completed requirements for an Early Childhood Education and an Elementary Teaching Certificate in 1976; completed requirements for the Master of Science degree in Family Relations and Child Development in December, 1977.

Professional Experience: Weekend Houseparent, Tri-County Youth Shelter, 1974-1975; Assistant Director of Project Appleseed (program for disadvantaged youth), 1975-1977; Recreation and Craft Coordinator, Leon J. York Youth Services Center, 1976-1977; Nursery School Teacher, Miss Carolyn's Preschool, 1977; and presently Teacher at Southern Heights Day Care Center.

Professional Organizations: Member of the Xi Chapter of Omicron Nu, National Home Economics Honor Society, Friends of Day Care, National Association of Young Children under Six, Southern Association on Children under Six, and Oklahoma Association on Children under Six.